

PREFATORY

SONNET TO THE VIRGIN MARY

Mother of God! who knowest the dire pangs
Of childbirth, and has suffered, and dost know
How utter sweet the full fruit of thy woe,
And how His heel hath crushed the serpent's fangs,
Be with me in the birth of this my book,
These songs of mine, poor children, like to die;
Yet, if they may not perish utterly,
It is to thee for sustenance I look.

Mother of God! be with me in success,
Abide with me if peradventure fail
These faint songs, murmurs of a summer gale
That my heart clothes within a mortal dress;
And with thy sympathy, their bliss or bale
Shall be too light to shake my happiness.